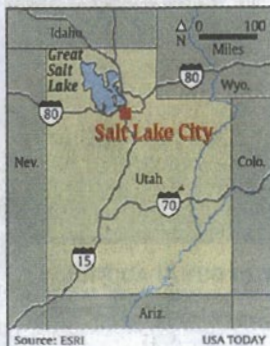


Salt Lake City

Get the convenience of city life, slopeside



Source: ESRI USA TODAY

Best for

Skiers and the active.

Claim to fame

Headquarters of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormon Church).

Don't miss

Temple Square, the "Vatican City" of Mormons, is the most visited attraction in Utah — more than all the ski resorts combined.

Getting there

The Salt Lake City International Airport has non-stop flights to about 80 destinations.

Tourism information

visitsaltlake.com

By Larry Olmsted
Special for USA TODAY

In February, Salt Lake made the news when it was named the nation's fittest city by *Men's Health* magazine. But second-home owners have known this for years.

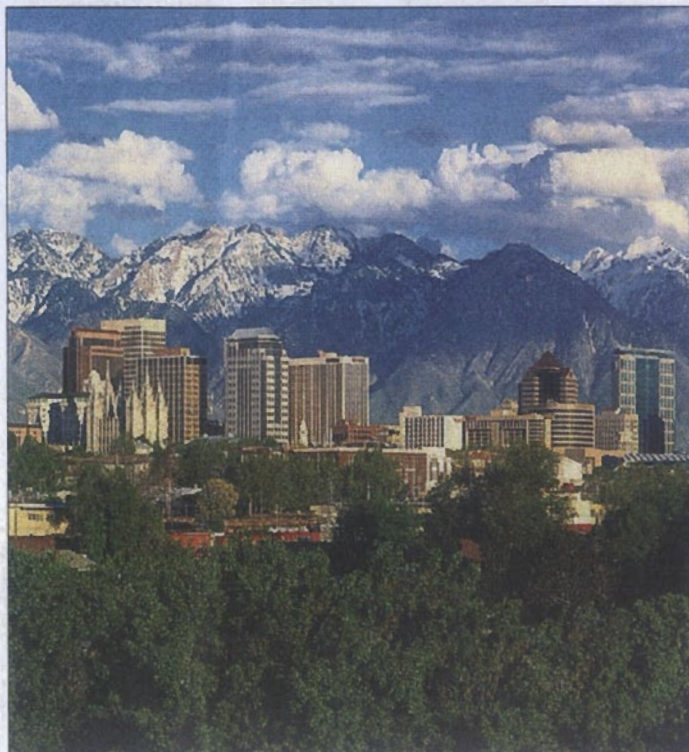
Skiing is the highest-profile active pursuit, especially since the 2002 Winter Olympic Games. Utah receives "Champagne powder," and 11 major ski resorts are within an hour. Some are as close as 10 minutes.

Fans are quick to point out that there is much more to the city. "What makes us unique is the convenience," says real estate agent Jeff Justice of the Bringhurst Group. "Trailheads lead right into the wilderness from in town. In the spring, as late as May, I can go skiing in the morning, play golf in the afternoon and finish the day with a bike ride. You can't do that in many urban areas."

While resort towns such as Park City have plenty of second homes, Salt Lake City has a different appeal — including price. Money goes a lot further here than at the ski resorts: Nicer second homes start under \$300,000, and a lot of choices are below half a million. "One guy calls the condo his 'cabin in the city,'" says Chris Corroon, developer of two downtown residential projects. "Quite a few bought here instead of Park City because they get something a lot cheaper and can also go to a Utah Jazz game or concert."

Says Scott Beck, CEO of the city's Convention & Visitors Bureau: "Everyone understands the skiing. But what we do is redefine the après-ski experience. Instead of wings at bars, we have opera, ballet, jazz, gourmet restaurants and all the urban amenities of a big city." One popular attraction is college football at the downtown University of Utah, which turns Saturdays in season into a citywide party.

Even in the heart of winter, the large Salt Lake airport rarely closes, and the weather is more moderate in the city. Plus, summer is never far away: Moab, home to three national parks, outstanding mountain biking and warm desert weather, is less than four hours away.



Salt Lake Convention & Visitors

The peaks of activity: Salt Lake City gives second-home owners easy access to skiing in the winter and hiking and biking in the summer — at a lower price than resort towns.

A look at three Salt Lake City neighborhoods

Downtown: In 2005, a former rail yard was redeveloped into the Parc at Gateway, a 10-acre retail and residential community with condos from \$150,000-\$450,000. City Creek is a more upscale development on 25 acres just south of Temple Square, the heart of downtown. It will feature 550 condos, and the first 90-unit luxury building opens this year. Prices range from the high \$200,000s to more than \$1 million (citycreekliving.com). Both are about 15 minutes from the airport.

The East Bench: The gateway to Little and Big Cottonwood Canyons, home to the famous Alta and Snowbird ski resorts. Neighborhoods that make up the East Bench include Cottonwood Heights, Sandy, Bell Canyon and Top of the World. All are popular with second-home owners, have easy-to-maintain townhouse and condo developments and offer easy access to hiking and biking trails. Cottonwood Heights is the most expensive, with a median home price of \$294,000, real estate agent Jeff Justice says. For a nicer second home, expect to spend \$300,000 to \$500,000.

Sugarhouse: One of the city's most desirable neighborhoods, filled with historic houses and bungalows built as early as the 1920s. Though it has mostly primary residences, second-home owners like its proximity to downtown and its location near Park City's three ski resorts, the Canyons, Deer Valley and Park City Mountain.



City Creek Reserve Inc.

On the market: Richards Court is a condo tower opening this year at City Creek, a mixed-use development in the heart of downtown Salt Lake City.

Midrange price: \$706,500

- **Bedrooms:** 2
- **Bathrooms:** 2
- **Size:** 1,263 square feet
- **Features:** Open floor plan with 9-foot ceilings, hardwood flooring, balcony off master bedroom, soaking tub and separate walk-in shower. Kitchen has GE Monogram professional appliances and granite counters, "smart home" media system throughout. Common area includes landscaped terrace, fitness center, underground parking, basement storage unit and bike storage.



The Bringhurst Group

On the market: This home is in Sandy, in the East Bench section of Salt Lake City.

Midrange price: \$399,900

- **Bedrooms:** 5
- **Bathrooms:** 4½
- **Size:** 4,132 square feet
- **Features:** Mountain views from deck, new eat-in kitchen with maple cabinets, two fireplaces, landscaping and garden, and two-car garage.

Next week: Upper Keys, Fla.



Dreaming of a vacation home? Find past stories at travel.usatoday.com.